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A

HISTORY

OF THE

TOWN OF SHREWSBURY,

FURNISHED FOR THE

WORCESTER MAGAZINE

AND

HISTORICAL JOURNAL.

BY ANDREW H. WARD, ESQ.



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THE AUTHOR.

H. L. ...
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PREFACE.

To collect and embody the principal interesting events, with the dates of their occurrence, that have transpired in a town in the course of a whole century, and such other matter as will be useful to be known, is a task, that none are aware of, but those who have undertaken it. A wish to aid the praiseworthy purpose, undertaken by two or three gentlemen, to furnish for the Press a history of each of the towns in the County of Worcester, has induced me to furnish that of Shrewsbury.

There are but few, if any, who would not like to know what *has been* in their native town—changes are taking place every year, and many interesting circumstances and important transactions are, in a few years after they happen, indistinctly remembered, and in a few more, wholly forgotten.

The young learn from the aged many interesting things that belonged to times long gone by—these cannot be correctly transmitted, without being made matter of record. *Many of the present day*, and after a lapse of a few more years, *all* then on the stage, will find accounts of some things herein, of which, but for a work like this, they would have been as unknowing, as they themselves were once unknown.

This work was therefore undertaken, with a belief, that it would not only be perused with interest at the present day, and prove instructive to the rising generation, but serve as a beginning of what, at some future day, will be an extended and more interesting history of the town—a foundation, on which, it is hoped, some one will hereafter, in due time, and with the addition of new materials, erect a superstructure, in which the reader will be entertained with things old and new.

That this History is perfect in every particular is not pretended—perfection belongs no more to the *works*, than to the *nature* of man—it was intended to be correct; and it is believed it is so—as it was written, not with a view to acquire the reputation of an author by making a book, but solely with a view to communicate useful and interesting information, it is hoped, it will not be read with a critic's eye—and as the motive for making it public is laudable, it is hoped, that this “first born” will, on going into the world unprotected, find none but friends, and nothing but kind treatment.

ANDREW H. WARD.

HISTORY OF SHREWSBURY.

SITUATION AND BOUNDARIES, LENGTH OF LINES AND THEIR COURSES.

THIS town is situated E. N. E. from Worcester, $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the Court House, and 37 miles from Boston by the way of the old post road. It is a post town, and the tenth in age, twentieth in population, and eighteenth in valuation in the County of Worcester;* and is bounded, beginning at the N. W. corner, on West Boylston, one hundred and two rods, and by Boylston fifteen hundred and seventy rods and an half on the north, ten hundred and seventy two rods by Northborough and seven hundred and seventy rods by Westborough on the east, fourteen hundred and sixty four rods and an half by Grafton on the south, and nineteen hundred and fourteen rods by Worcester on the west.

The township of Shrewsbury was granted to certain persons, Nov. 2, 1717, most of whom belonged to Marlborough, and was originally laid out much larger than it now is. It began to be settled in 1717, by a few people from Marlborough, though not so soon as a few towns in its vicinity: indeed, at that time, people not deeming it a good tract of land, passed through and took up their residence elsewhere. Little other use was made of it, than to pass over it in pursuit of a settlement in some supposed better place, while repeated and destructive fires, set by people in the adjacent towns, had consumed vast tracts of wood and timber, and even the very soil itself, in some places to the hard pan, for many acres.

It is not known that the Indians ever disturbed the settlement of this town; there being no accounts on record, or otherwise, of their having destroyed the lives or property of their more civiliz-

* According to the census of 1820, and its proportion of 75,000 dollars, being the State tax of Feb 21, 1824.

ed, but encroaching neighbors in this quarter ; or that any fear was ever here entertained on account of them. They had some years before, in that retreat, which they have ever since continued, and which has been as rapidly followed by the white men, retired to a distance too great to alarm the first settlers of Shrewsbury. It may seem remarkable, but it is believed, that the name of *Indian* is not to be found on the records of the town.

The town at first contained all the lands lying between the original grant of Lancaster on the north, Marlborough on the east, Sutton on the south, and Worcester on the west. So rapid was the increase of the population, that the inhabitants of the town, in ten years from the commencement of its settlement, presented the following petition to be incorporated into a town.

“To the Hon. William Dummer, Esq. the Lieut. Governor and commander in chief, the Honorable the Council, and the Honorable House of Representatives of His Majesty’s Province of the Massachusetts Bay, in New England, in General Court assembled, Nov. 22, 1727.

“The petition of the inhabitants of Shrewsbury, in the County of Middlesex, humbly sheweth : that your petitioners were by this Great and Honorable Court erected into a township, and not having granted unto them the immunities and privileges of other towns within this Province, were put under the care of a committee, which committee carried on that work to great satisfaction, but have now declined acting ; so that your petitioners are under great difficulties as to paying their Minister and raising the public taxes ; and the Province Treasurer has issued forth his warrant directing the assessing of the inhabitants of the town of Shrewsbury their Province tax for this year : And for as much as your petitioners have no Selectmen or Assessors, nor are empowered to choose town officers, whereby many and great inconveniences do arise ; therefore, your petitioners most humbly pray your Honors consideration of the premises, and that your Honors would be pleased to empower the town of Shrewsbury to use and exercise the same immunities and privileges as other towns within this Province hold and enjoy, and that a day may be assigned for the choice of town officers for the year current, and your petitioners, as in duty bound, shall ever pray, &c.”

JOHN KEYES, }
DANIEL HOWE, } *In behalf of*
NAHUM WARD, } *the town.*

The foregoing petition having been presented, was acted upon as follows :

“In the House of Representatives, Dec. 14, 1727. Read and ordered, that the prayer of the petition be granted and that the said town of Shrewsbury is accordingly endowed with equal power, privileges, and immunities, with any other town in this Province; and that Capt. John Keyes, a principal inhabitant in the said town, be empowered and directed to notify and summon the inhabitants duly qualified for voters, to meet and assemble for the choosing of town officers, to stand until the next annual election according to law.

Sent up for concurrence.

WM. DUDLEY, *Speaker*.

In Council, Dec. 15, 1727, read a first and second time and passed in concurrence.

J. WILLARD, *Sec'y*.

Consented to, WM. DUMMER.

The first town meeting held here was on the 29th day of Dec. 1727. Shrewsbury originally included most of what is now Boylston, most of West Boylston, a small portion of Sterling, Westborough and Grafton. In 1741, four petitioners, viz. Ebenezer Cutler, Obediah Newton, Noah Brooks and David Read, with their farms, were taken from the town of Shrewsbury, and annexed to the town of Grafton; in 1752, William Whitney, Zachariah Eager, Jonathan Foster, Zachariah Harvey, Edward Newton, Samuel Newton, Ezekiel Newton and Daniel Wheelock, with others, at their request: and all the lands in the then north part of the town, lying on the north side of Quinepoxet river, and between the towns of Lancaster and Holden, known by the name of the *Leg*, were voted off by the town, and, in 1768, annexed to Lancaster; in 1762, William Nurse and others, living in the southeasterly part of the town, and so much of that part of the town, usually called the *Shoe* (sometimes Nurse's corner) were annexed to Westborough. March 1, 1736, the north part of the town, then constituting the 2d Parish, was incorporated into a town by the name of Boylston: and in March, 1793, Elijah Whitney and his farm were taken from this town and set to Westborough. Having thus been pared and clipped, always giving and eventually receiving nothing, the territory of the town has, since that time, remained entire, yet not without attempts to dismember some part of it.*

In 1795, Silas Keyes, known as a skilful and correct surveyor, with a view, among other things, to ascertain the contents of the

* There has been another amputation since the above was written. Tarrant Merriam, with about 186 acres of land, has been taken from this town and annexed to Grafton.

town, took a survey of its limits, which it may not be amiss to make matter of public record. It was found on a loose paper, and is as follows: "The following are the limits of the town of Shrewsbury, as taken by Silas Keyes, in the year 1795, beginning at the south west corner of Boylston, (now West Boylston) and runs east, nine degrees north, ten rods to road; thence east, nine degrees north, seven and an half rods; thence north, six degrees east, thirty nine rods; thence east, thirteen degrees south, one hundred and sixty rods to county road; thence same course fifteen rods to a heap of stones; thence east, nineteen degrees north, two hundred and seventy rods to do.; thence south, fifteen degrees west, thirty five rods to do.; thence east, eleven degrees forty one minutes north, one hundred and sixty six rods to do.; thence north, twenty six degrees east, seventy four rods to do.; thence east nineteen and a half degrees north, five hundred and fifty nine rods to a stake and stones; thence south, forty four degrees east, sixty seven rods to a heap of stones; thence west, thirty degrees south, forty three rods to rock and stones; thence south, three degrees west, thirty seven rods to stake and stones; thence east, twelve degrees north, one hundred and eleven rods to a heap do.; thence south, seven and a half degrees west, forty four rods to do.; thence east, thirty five degrees south, sixty rods to north east corner; thence south, sixteen degrees west, one hundred forty nine rods to heap stones; thence south, twenty four degrees east, one hundred and eighty two rods to great rock; thence south, twenty one degrees east, one hundred and fifty rods to heap stones; thence south, one degree east, twenty rods to great road; thence same course three hundred and seventeen rods to an oak; thence south, twenty eight degrees thirty five minutes east, one hundred and ninety four rods to Westborough corner; thence same course three hundred and fourteen rods to heap of stones; thence west, twenty eight degrees forty minutes south, two hundred and twenty six rods to do.; thence south forty two degrees fifteen minutes west, sixty seven rods to a maple; thence south thirty five degrees west, one hundred and twelve rods to heap stones; thence south thirty three degrees thirty minutes east, fifty one rods to an oak at Grafton corner; thence west, thirty three degrees south, one hundred two and a half rods to heap stones; thence west, forty five degrees south, twenty three rods to white oak; thence west, twenty four degrees north, six rods to heap stones; thence north, seventeen degrees west, thirty four and an half rods to do.; thence west, twenty three degrees south, thirty

four rods to do. ; thence south, twenty six degrees west, forty one and an half rods to do. ; thence west, thirty four degrees north, forty five rods to do. ; thence north, six and a half degrees west, seventy three and an half rods to white oak ; thence west, thirteen degrees south seventy three and an half rods to heap stones ; thence south, eighteen degrees east, thirty four rods to an oak and stones ; thence west, twelve degrees south, seventy nine rods to heap stones ; thence south, six degrees west, forty two rods to do. ; thence west, four degrees north, sixty eight rods to pitch pine ; thence north, two degrees west, twenty six and an half rods to a walnut tree ; thence west, four degrees north, twenty rods to an oak at Bummet meadow ; thence south, nine degrees west, forty six rods by meadow ; thence south, twenty eight degrees east, twenty six rods to stake in do. ; thence south, twenty four degrees west, twenty two rods to poplar stump ; thence south, six degrees west, thirty three and an half rods to an oak by county road ; thence west, four degrees north, twenty nine rods to heap stones ; thence west, thirty nine degrees south, forty five and an half rods to do. ; thence south, forty four degrees west, forty eight rods to do. ; thence west, five degrees south, one hundred and thirty six rods to white oak ; thence north, thirty degrees west, eighty five rods to county road ; thence east, twenty seven degrees north, nineteen and an half rods by said road ; thence north, four degrees west, fourteen rods to heap stones ; thence west seven degrees north, fifty five rods to do. ; thence south, five degrees east, sixty rods to do. ; thence west, fourteen degrees south, one hundred and eighteen rods to white oak ; thence south, five degrees east, twenty four rods to maple tree at the river ; thence angling up said river, one hundred eighty seven rods to a creek that connects Flint's pond and said river ; thence west, three degrees south, forty rods to Flint's pond ; thence west, forty degrees south, fifty four rods by said pond ; thence west fifteen degrees north, twenty two rods ; thence west, eight degrees north, forty rods ; thence north, forty degrees west, twenty eight rods to half moon pond ; thence west, seven degrees north, one hundred rods to a heap stones ; thence north, eleven degrees west, two hundred sixty nine rods to a chesnut tree on the west side long pond ; thence north, two degrees west, nine hundred and ten rods to a grey oak on the west side and near the head of long pond ; thence north, twenty degrees west, twenty two rods to great road ; thence same course one hundred and fifty two rods to Boylston road ; thence same course one hundred and ninety rods to where it began."

An error occurred in making the plan of the town of Boylston, when set off from Shrewsbury, and was copied into the Act incorporating that town. The plan commences at Worcester line (West Boylston having since been set off from Boylston) and, after describing two short courses, arrives at the north line of Nathaniel Heywood's farm; then it is marked on the plan east, thirteen and one quarter degrees north, one hundred and seventy eight rods, instead of north, thirteen and one quarter degrees east, one hundred and seventy eight rods, as the line should be; making a difference of twenty six and one half degrees, and, being on a long line and near the beginning of the plan, all the after courses are removed seventy nine rods northward from what was intended—As this error is suffered to continue without any measures being taken to have it corrected, it will not be matter of surprise, if, at some future day, it should give rise to some legal controversy; more particularly, as there are several families now within the limits of Shrewsbury, whom, with their lands, it was intended to have set off with Boylston; who are now taxed and do duty and enjoy privileges there, yet are not within the limits or jurisdiction of that town.

CULTIVATION, &c.—This town presents to the eye an uneven surface, variegated with hills and vallies. A range of high land, extending from north to south, passes through the middle of the town. The numerous swells and tracts of rolling land, which are, most of them, in a good state of cultivation, are to be seen in all directions from the middle of the town and serve to relieve the eye from that sameness, which some towns afford, when taking a landscape view of them. There is more wood, it is generally supposed, growing here now, than there was fifty years ago; it consists of oak of the various kinds, walnut and chesnut on the high grounds; and in the low lands, maple, ash, birch &c. There is but little pine in the town. There are some indications of coal, as far east as the middle of the town, of the same nature as the Worcester coal, but not so near the surface. No minerals are known to exist here, at least not sufficient to induce people to explore by day and watch by night, as they have done in some places, for hidden treasures. Yet, as a great proportion of the inhabitants are farmers, they find their treasure by digging, but not more than *furrow* deep. They have made great improvement in the appearance of their farms, stocks of cattle and swine for a few years past; to which they have been in no small degree excited by the influence of agricultural societies and publications on agricultural subjects. An agricultural

society, composed of individuals associated from the towns of Shrewsbury, Boylston, Northborough and Westborough, was formed here in 1811, and continued its enquiries, experiments and pursuits, not merely to the advantage of those belonging to it, but to others, till some time after the formation of the Worcester Agricultural Society; when its members, dissolving their connexion, most of them became members of that society.

Clay is found here suitable for making bricks, and probably there are considerable beds of it—but at present they are but little explored and little use is made of it. The soil, though naturally rough and hard to subdue, is very strong, and never fails to yield an equivalent to the industrious husbandman for the labor he bestows upon it. A good proportion of the fences are stone walls; which it has been the practice of late to set in trenches, whereby much loam and vegetable earth, sufficient to pay for digging the trench, are procured and carried upon low mowing grounds or into yards for manure. And this, though an ample compensation for the labor it requires, is but a small part of the benefit arising from this practice. The trench furnishes a place of deposit for multitudes of small cobble-stones, troublesome in the field, but here put out of the way, making a sure and stable foundation for the walls, which are never thrown down by the frost. Generally the trench is not dug so wide as it should be; bushes and briars are apt to spring up and flourish by the sides of walls; and though a good husbandman will cut them down, yet they are less likely to grow, and if they do, they are easier removed, root and branch, when the trenches are made several inches wider than the walls stand. It is remarkable to observe here, and it may be seen in many towns in this vicinity, the astonishing difference between the present and former times in making manure. Scarcely a low place can be found by the road side, that is not occupied with compost which with the wash of the road, that incorporates itself with it, is in a year or two carried to the fields and its place supplied with new materials.

But little attention is paid to the cultivation of flax. Grains of all kinds yield abundant crops, while the white honey suckle of the pastures furnishes good keeping for dairy cows and early beef. Plaister of Paris has been used here with success, and though most so on pasture land, yet not without effect on mowings and tillage land. The amount of hay cut in this town is large, and much of it of good quality; it has become a staple article, and is carried to Boston in large quantities, and finds a ready market.

PONDS AND STREAMS.—Though there are no considerable streams in this town, it suffers very little in a dry season. It is supplied with a sufficiency of water, in small rivulets, to answer the common purposes of the inhabitants. The largest stream is that which comes from Sewall's Pond, in the south west part of Boylston, and running southerly about a mile and an half falls into Long Pond, where, and at the head of which, passes the old Post road to Worcester. This pond was called by the natives Quinsigamond Pond, but is now better known by the name of Long Pond; it lies partly in Shrewsbury and whether the residue is in Shrewsbury or Worcester, will probably be a subject of future investigation. Worcester was laid out in 1668, to be bounded Easterly on Quinsigamond Pond, and when Shrewsbury was laid out in 1717, it was bounded by Worcester on the west.

As Keyes' survey does not include all of the Pond in this town (why he departed from the line as originally established between Shrewsbury and Worcester is not known) it would seem, if he is correct, that a part of it belongs (and there are no islands in that part) to neither town. Long Pond extends north and south; and is a very large body of water, nearly in the form of a crescent, and is about four miles in length on the western shore; yet, on a straight line, as measured on the ice, it is but a little more than three miles; its width varies from one hundred rods to three fourths of a mile; it is the largest body of water in the county and deserves rather the name of a Lake, than a Pond. Much of the wood, which formerly grew on either shore, has been cut off, and the view of its waters become more extensive. It is well supplied with the usual kinds of fish, that are to be found in the interior Ponds; and, from the depth, as well as extent of its waters, is a suitable place to try the experiments, said to have been successfully made in England, of propagating in fresh water those noble fish, the cod, mackerel, haddock, and perhaps the halibut! for which, we, as yet, have to depend wholly on the ocean. That such an undertaking would not succeed, we ought not to believe, merely because no one has yet been liberal and patriotic enough to exile some of the finny tribes from their great and briny domain in a living state to this interior sea, this *water* house of correction, if you please, there to be confined to hard labor for life! And which, if it did not improve their *morals*, would at least without the means of doing harm, give them a *fresh* opportunity of improving those talents, which nature has given them; and result beyond all doubt in the multiplication

of their numbers to the great comfort and well being of those of the human family, who live in the vicinity ! There is no doubt it would succeed ; and if he, who makes two blades of grass grow, where but one grew before, is worth more to mankind, than the whole race of politicians put together, the man, who should effect this, would be held in estimation far exceeding the united regard entertained for all the grass growers in the country. He would, in all probability, live to see the time, when the *consequences* of his benevolent undertaking would be in every man's *mouth*, and every man's *mouth* full of the *consequences* : while thousands, enjoying the sport of taking and feasting on the luxuries of the Pond, would hand down his name to posterity, as that of a public benefactor. Then there would be also the satisfaction, and it would be no small one, of knowing, that while gormandizing, some, even while under the greatest excitement, should they have a disposition to find fault with the times, censure their neighbors, speak evil of their rulers, slander their best friends, or curse their enemies, would have their mouths *stopped* for a while by the bountiful productions of the pond : and even the Legislature have some occasional respites from the anathemas, so generally and plentifully bestowed upon them, for their *over much legislation* on the subject of the preservation of *small fish*, and thereby *fishing* money from the pockets of their constituents. Instead of so much legislation for the preservation of *small fish* in *small* streams, it would better accord with the spirit of the times, in this age of internal improvement, to encourage by Statute, the *large* fish of the ocean to emigrate to our *large* inland ponds : should they decline emigrating, compulsory process, authorized and encouraged by law, would effect it. The immense advantages that would arise from it, cannot be *foreseen*, if it were only, as farmers say, from the benefit, that might be derived from crossing the breed !

There are several brooks, which empty their waters into this pond. It is clustered with no less than twelve islands of various sizes. The first is Ram Island, at the west end of the Floating Bridge ; it contains about two acres, and is mostly covered with wood. Little Pine Island, the second, is one and an half mile down the pond, and is about 40 rods from the western shore ; it contains half an acre, principally covered with small pines. The third is three rods south of the last, of one fourth of an acre, covered with fruitful grape vines, and called Grape Island. The fourth is

Grass Island, of one eighth of an acre, mowed sometimes, and is twenty rods from Grape Island, and nearer the middle of the pond. Bowman's Island is the fifth, covered with wood, and lies southeast twelve rods from Grass Island, and contains three acres. The sixth is Bayberry Island, near the west shore, of about two acres. The seventh, is Sherman's Island, of one and a half acre, near the east shore, and covered with wood. Nearly south, and about thirty five rods is the eighth, called Grass Island, of one eighth of an acre and has been mowed. The ninth is called Shoe-make Island of one and an half acre, and is twenty five rods south of Bayberry Island. The tenth is Sharp Pine Island, of half an acre, and twenty five rods south of Shoe-make Island. The eleventh is a small Grass Island, half a mile south of Sharp Pine Island, of one eighth of an acre, and twenty rods from the south west corner of the pond. The twelfth is called Stratton's Island, and contains one hundred and fifty acres, principally under cultivation, and has several families living upon it.

Some of the other Islands are more or less cultivated, and are known by different names.

Some idea of the boldness of the shores, the depth of the water and unevenness of the bottom of the pond, may be formed by viewing the land on its borders and adjacent to it. So large a body of water was not destined to lie always dormant and unimproved. This pond, and the others connected with it, at its south end, unite in one outlet, which, passing in a southeasterly direction, enters the town of Grafton, and becomes a principal tributary to Blackstone River, upon which a Canal is now constructing to Providence. This pond rises and falls, according as there are heavy rains and sudden thaws in the spring, or dry seasons, about two feet; though it has been known to vary considerably more. It was in contemplation many years ago, to construct a Canal from Providence to unite with the waters of this pond, but the death of its principal projector caused it to be abandoned. The subject has been again called up, and the work is progressing and excavations making to carry it into effect; and the time is not far distant, when this body of water will contribute wonderfully to the growth and prosperity of the neighboring villages and towns, and even to the more remote settlements.

Stratton Island is bounded on the west and north by Long Pond, on the east by Round Pond, south by Flint's Pond, and south west

by Half Moon Pond; all of which communicate with each other. The communication of the waters on the southwesterly part of the Island, between Half Moon and Flint's pond has been stopped by means of a gravel causeway having been constructed there. The outlet from Long Pond, is into Round Pond, and is at the northeast corner of the Island; it is very narrow, and by means of a short bridge, the Island and the main land are connected. A dam was erected here about four years ago, at a trifling expense with a small flume and gate; by means of which, the water was raised in the pond several feet; yet, on account of its steep banks, it did not overflow so much land as might naturally have been expected. It is now in contemplation by means of a dam at this place, to raise the water still higher, (from four to nine feet,) for the purpose of procuring and retaining a head of water sufficient for the use of mills &c. situated below, and manufacturing establishments about to be erected there.

There is but one other pond in Shrewsbury, and that is called Jordan Pond, lying about midway of the length of Long Pond and about half a mile east of it. Its waters, at some seasons in the year, empty into Long Pond. On the stream that runs from Sewall's Pond into Long Pond, there is a grist mill and a saw mill: there is also a stream on which are two saw mills and a grist mill, that rises in the north west part of the town, and, running southerly, crosses the old post road about a mile east of the head of Long Pond and empties into it about ten rods north of where the Worcester Turnpike crosses the Pond.

Some small brooks, rising in the southerly part of Boylston, and northerly part of Shrewsbury, and running southerly and easterly, form a stream on which there is a saw mill and grist mill; thence running northeasterly passes through the south east corner of Boylston; then it turns southerly, and runs into Northborough and through cold harbour meadows into the river Assabet. A small stream, rising principally from springs a little south of the Congregational Meeting House, and running easterly and then northeasterly, has two grist mills thereon and comes to the side of the post road in the east part of the town, furnishing a convenient watering place for travellers and teamsters: here it is joined by two small rivulets, that come in from the north, when it takes a southeast direction and falls into the Assabet in the southwesterly part of Northborough. Still farther south are springs, that give rise to a stream,

that runs southerly and has a grist mill and saw mill thereon, and continuing in the same direction, takes, with other waters, the name of Bummet Brook, and passes into Grafton; thence by the way of the Blackstone to the sea below Rhode Island.

Most of the waters of this town go that way to the sea, while a small portion, those that fall into the Assabet, go into the Merrimac.

There are in this town six grist mills, and five saw mills; yet, in dry seasons, some of the inhabitants are under the necessity of resorting to the mills in the neighboring towns, principally Boylston and Grafton, for grinding.

HIGHLANDS.—The greater part of this town is high land: it consists rather of gradual and large extensive swells, than steep and high hills. There are none of them inaccessible to teams, or in an uncultivated state. Sewall's hill, however, in the northwest part of the town is the most so, and is considerable rocky. The land falls but very little to the north, while to the south, the descent is long and gradual. To the east, there is a descent of more than two miles, extending into Northborough; on the west, the descent is moderate for about half a mile over Rocky Plain, so called, when it becomes more steep, till it reaches the flat land, that extends nearly to the head of Long Pond; beyond which the land immediately rises to a considerable height; from the top of which it is about thirty rods to Worcester line.

One of these swells received from the proprietors, at the first settlement of the town, by way of distinction, the name of Meeting House Hill, and is about half a mile north of where the Congregational Meeting House now stands. About half a mile east of north of this swell is another, called Rawson Hill; while to the southeast, something more than a mile, is another, called Sounding Hill; over the south part of which passes the Worcester Turnpike; from this, a short distance northerly, is another, called Goulding Hill. Besides these, there are several others. The soil of them is excellent and most of them are in a high state of cultivation. Rawson Hill is the highest land in town; being about thirty feet higher than Meeting House Hill, and sixty higher than Mill Stone Hill in Worcester, and as high as the ground on which Princeton Meeting House stands.

ROADS, &c.—This town is proverbial for its good roads. Great attention is paid to them. There are two large roads passing

through the town east and West: the north one is the old post road from Boston to Worcester; which, passing through the thickest settled part of the town and over the head of Long Pond, forms a junction with the other, which is the Worcester Turnpike, near the Gaol in Worcester. This road was laid out as a county road, at, or before the settlement of the town, and while it formed a part of the county of Middlesex. It is on the records of that county, but not on the town record, or that of the county of Worcester. It was laid out four rods wide, without any particular bounds or courses, and is 1510 rods in length, in Shrewsbury. The act, chartering the Worcester Turnpike Corporation, was passed June 10th, 1808; and that road soon after made; its length in Shrewsbury is 1350 rods. It runs nearly parallel with the post road, varying from one and an half to two miles from it. It is four rods wide and rather hilly through most of the town. It crosses Long Pond, about two miles south of the head of it, by means of a floating bridge, being the third bridge, that has been thrown over the pond at this place, for the purpose of crossing it. The first was a floating bridge, and cost about \$9000. It consisted of two or three tiers of round timbers laid lengthways and then crossways, and then overlaid with a course of hewn timber, covered with plank, and fastened to large abutments at the shores. This bridge soon proved to be weak and unsafe, and after a few years was succeeded by another of the same materials, and cost \$13,000. It was constructed by sinking nine piers; the centre one of these was sixty feet by sixty; the others sixty by thirty, placed in a line about thirty feet apart. The piers were constructed separately, and designed to rest on the bottom of the pond: this was done, by laying the course, then lapping and building after the manner of a cob house, and pinning where the timbers lapped and crossed; by building in this manner, as the weight increased, the frames settled and the work continued, till the frame of each pier found a resting place at the bottom, reaching and remaining considerably above the water; towards the top, the piers were connected to each other by timbers, and upon the top even overlaid with them; over the whole was laid a quantity of gravel. But on account of the mud in some places, and gravel in others, at the bottom of the pond, some of the piers continued to settle and others remained stationary. The four eastern piers, as they settled, leaned to the south. It was endeavored to keep the surface level by putting on gravel, which probably hastened its destruction; for, by increasing the incumbent weight, the piers (ma-

ny of their timbers having started from their fastenings) so far lost their perpendicularity, that in the morning of the 19th Sept. 1817, near the time of its completion, and while the workmen were most of them near by, at breakfast, the bridge separated near the center, and the east half turned over into the pond to the south, and the other half, breaking up, tumbled in, pier after pier, in broken masses, towards the middle of the pond. Fortunately, no lives were lost, though some were in imminent danger. As the pond varied from fifty to seventy feet in depth at this place, (and in others was more than one hundred) it had taken no less than fifty four thousand feet of timber to construct this bridge; most of which, upon turning over, separated, and came to the surface in single sticks and large blocks pinned together, presenting such a wreck of materials as perhaps was never seen before on any inland waters in this country. The next winter, the present bridge was built upon the ice at the west side of the Pond, mostly of hewn white pine timber, at an expense of \$6,000, and in the spring following swung round to its place; and to this day well answers the purpose for which it was designed; it is five hundred and twenty five feet long and thirty wide.

The Holden and Rutland Turnpike, four rods wide, is 400 rods in length in Shrewsbury, and ends upon entering the old Post road about half a mile east of the head of Long Pond. There is a small piece of County road, three rods wide, and 200 in length, passing in a northeasterly direction from Worcester line, near the Poor house of that town, to Boylston. In the south part of the town, there is a County road three rods wide, and two hundred and fifty in length, leading from the Gore near Worcester, in an easterly direction, and crossing the town road leading to Grafton; on the south of which commences, and runs south, another County road, leading to the middle of the town of Grafton, three rods wide, and one hundred and eighteen in length in Shrewsbury. All the other roads in this town are town roads, and are thirty-seven in number. They were surveyed, their courses taken, and bounds established, the roads numbered and accepted by the town, and recorded at full length on the town records in the year 1805; except the seven last, which have since been laid out, numbered, accepted and recorded in like manner as the first. There are also a few bridle ways. With some trifling alterations, the courses of the roads remain as in 1805.

The width and length of each road and quantity of land occupied by each, is as follows, viz.

<i>Rods</i>			<i>rods of</i>	<i>Rods</i>			<i>rods of</i>
<i>wide.</i>	<i>long.</i>		<i>land.</i>	<i>wide.</i>	<i>long.</i>		<i>land.</i>
Post Road,	4	1510	6040	Town Road, No. 15	2	92	184
Worcester Turnpike,	4	1350	5400	No. 16	2	151	302
Holden Turnpike,	4	400	1600	No. 17	2	400	800
County road to }	3	200	600	No. 18	2	35	70
Boylston, }				No. 19	2	791	1582
County road from }	3	250	750	No. 20	2	222	444
Gore, leading east, }				No. 21	2½	621	1552
County road leading }	3	118	354	No. 22	2	408	816
south to Grafton, }				No. 23	2	132	264
Town road, No. 1	2	747	1494	No. 24	2	38	76
No. 2	2	1165	2330	No. 25	2	503	1006
No. 3	2	88	176	No. 26	2	520	1040
No. 4	2	322	644	No. 27	2	311	622
No. 5	2	68	136	No. 28	2	63	126
No. 6	2	605	1210	No. 29	2	356	712
No. 7	2	952	1904	No. 30	2	545	1090
No. 8	2	70	140	No. 31	2	185	370
No. 9	2	653	1306	No. 32	2	42½	85
No. 10	2	244	488	No. 33	1 13½	15	22
No. 11	2	80	160	No. 34	2	42	84
No. 12	2½	1206	3050	No. 35 <i>dis'd</i>			
No. 13	2	442	884	No. 36	2	161½	323
No. 14	2	790	1580	No. 37	2	62	124

Making fifty three miles of road, occupying two hundred and sixty two acres of land.

The whole contents of the town amount to fourteen thousand and sixty acres, of which seven hundred and ninety eight are water. The burying ground contains two acres and sixty one rods, and the common around the Congregational Meeting House, four acres and one hundred and twenty seven rods of land.

The town is divided into eleven highway districts, and the usual grant for the repair of its roads \$800, annually, which is paid in labor by those on whom it is assessed.

The amount of the travel on the old post road and Worcester Turnpike, is very great. The Post Office is kept on the first in the middle of the town, where the mail from Boston is opened every day (except Sundays) as is also the mail from the west. Four Stages pass on the old road every day, (Sundays excepted) and five each day on the Turnpike. The great southern mail from Boston to New York, is carried in the stage on the Turnpike, and passes every day, as does the return mail from the south, to Boston. They generally pass each other about 6 P. M. within the limits of this town. There is considerable and increasing travel from the northward, directly through the middle of the town to Providence.

ECCLESIASTICAL.—This town contains three religious societies, one Congregational, one Baptist, and one Restoration Society; each having a Meeting House. The first was the only religious society in the town, until within a few years past.

The precise time, when the first Meeting House was built, cannot be ascertained; but from what can be gathered from the proprietor's records, it was in the latter part of 1721 and in 1722. Oct. 27, 1719, the proprietors of the township of Shrewsbury "voted that the place for the Meeting House be on Rocky Plain, near the pines (there were several large pines within the recollection of some of the inhabitants now living, standing a little back of where the Congregational Meeting House now stands) and that, in case the land agreed upon for a Meeting House could not be procured upon reasonable terms, then, the Meeting House be set on the hill northward therefrom, called Meeting House hill;* and that the Meeting House be forty feet in length, thirty two in breadth, and fourteen feet stud." In April after, a committee was chosen "to manage about the Meeting House;" and in May succeeding, the votes passed on the 27th Oct. 1719, respecting the Meeting House, were confirmed by the proprietors, and measures taken to have two Saw Mills built in the town, to be put in operation by the first of May, 1721. On the 22d of June following, they "voted two hundred and ten pounds for, and towards building a Meeting House, it being five pounds on each proprietor;" and "chose a committee to address the Rev. Mr. Breck, of Marlborough, in behalf of the proprietors of Shrewsbury, praying his notes of a sermon preached by himself in said town at a lecture, on the 15th of June, 1720, in order to have the same sermon printed at the expense of the proprietors." This was the first sermon preached in Shrewsbury; it was printed, and if a copy could be found, it would be worth while to preserve it. At their last mentioned meeting, the proprietors empowered a committee to contract with some person to build, and finish a Meeting House. These meetings of the proprietors were all held at the house of the widow Elizabeth Howe, in Marlborough.

In November, 1722, on application to John Houghton Esq. of Lancaster, he issued a warrant calling a meeting of the Proprietors, to be held, on the twenty eighth of that month, at the Meeting-house, "to consider and conclude of all, or any thing or things proper

* The land was afterwards procured of William Taylor, one of the Proprietors, who exchanged acre for acre (the whole quantity, ten acres) and took swamp land in the Gulf, so called, for his pay.

and necessary to be done for the procuring of a Minister, &c." and, as that appears to be the first time the Meeting House was occupied for any public use, it is presumed, that it had not then long been finished. It was located about eight rods to the north east of where the present Congregational Meeting House now stands. That house, after a lapse of forty years, being unsuitable to accommodate the inhabitants, the Parish voted in October, 1764, to build a new Meeting House, which is the present one. It is sixty feet long, forty five wide, with twenty seven feet posts, and a porch at each of the three outer doors. In 1807, a bellfry, with a steeple, was annexed to the west end of the Meeting House, and in 1808, a bell placed therein, both at the expense of certain individuals of the town.

At a meeting of the proprietors by adjournment, April 17, 1723, it was "voted, to nominate two or three Ministers to a settlement." Mr. Cushing, Mr. Barret and Mr. Bailey, were nominated; and there appeared 18 for the first, 16 for the second, and 4 for the third. On the 15th of May following, they chose Mr. Cushing to be their Minister by a full vote, and gave him £60 settlement, and £60 salary per year, for the two first years, then to rise 4 pounds a year, until it should amount to £80. The church was first gathered here on the 4th day of December, 1723, and he ordained on the same day. He continued here in the ministry nearly thirty seven years, and was suddenly taken away by a fit of the apoplexy, August 6, 1760, in the 67th year of his age. During his ministry, the north part of the town, after several unsuccessful attempts, sometimes to be set off as a separate town, and at others, as a Parish, was set off and incorporated as a distinct Parish, Dec. 17, 1742; not on account of any dissatisfaction of his parishioners towards him, for he lived and died in peace with his people; but on account of the increasing number, and remote situation in which many of them in that part of the town lived from the Meeting House.

February 2, 1761, the Parish concurred with the church in the choice of Mr. Joshua Paine, to become their Pastor; and voted him £66 13 shillings, as an annual salary, during the time he should continue to preach the Gospel in this place; and £200 settlement. Mr. Paine declined the invitation. After hearing several candidates, the Parish voted, Dec. 30, 1761, "to hear Mr. Joseph Sumner (of Pomfret, Conn.) if he might be had;" and on the 30th of March, 1762, the Parish concurred with the church in the choice of Mr. Sumner, to be their Pastor: and voted

him the same settlement as to Mr. Paine, and sixty six pounds, thirteen shillings, and four pence, lawful money, annually, as a salary. Having accepted the call, he was ordained on the 23d day of June, 1762, at the age of twenty three.

The Meeting House being small, and unsafe for so large a collection of people, as assembled, the ordination solemnities were held out of doors, on a platform erected in front of the Meeting House, and the day observed by the Parish with fasting and prayer, in conformity with a vote of the church, in which the Parish concurred; "to observe said day, as a day of fasting and prayer, as being most agreeable to the Scripture rule of ordaining, as said church apprehends." After Mr. Sumner's acceptance, and before his ordination, the Parish increased his salary to £72 or \$240 per annum, to take effect in ten years after his settlement. This additional grant, occasioning uneasiness in the minds of some, was relinquished by him in writing on the 12th of March, 1763, for peace sake; he at the same time informing his parishioners, that he "relied on their generosity for the future, if he should stand in need of further help, that they would be as ready to afford it, as he should be to ask it of them." Thus early in his life was manifested to our Fathers, what was exhibited to their posterity, a disposition to live peaceably with all men; and which so much distinguished, through a long life, this late venerable man of God.

Several grants were made to the Rev. Mr. Sumner, in the earlier part of his ministry, in addition to his stated salary. In 1809, his salary was raised to \$286 67 per annum, and so remained till June, 1820; when, by reason of the infirmities of age, and the prospect of having a colleague, Samuel B. Ingersoll, settled with him in the ministry, and on whom would devolve the more arduous labors and active duties, he, voluntarily, and in writing, relinquished, from and after the settlement of Mr. Ingersoll, all his salary, except \$142 per year, which he continued to receive till the time of his death, which happened Dec. 9, 1824, in the 63d year of his ministry, and 35th year of his age. Notwithstanding his salary was small, he was enabled by prudence and economy to leave, after having brought up a large family of children, a handsome property, mostly in real estate.* In 1814, he received the honora-

* Dr. Sumner was no less remarkable for his affability and social qualities through life, than for his sound sense and dignified deportment. He never seemed to be taken by surprize; he always had a ready answer; his cheerful manner of giving it, and its peculiar fitness astonished as well as delighted those who heard him. He was a member of an ordaining Council at Prince-

ry degree of D. D. from Harvard University, and about the same time a similar honor was conferred upon him by Columbia College, in South Carolina; an honor, the bestowment of which, while it reflected increasing honor on those Institutions, not in the least excited his vanity or inflated his pride—honors, which brightened as he wore them, and proved how judiciously they were conferred, where the subject was so worthy of them. On the 23d of June, 1812, he preached his half century sermon, which has gone through two editions and contains much valuable information. At the time of his death, there was not an individual in town, who was a member of the church at his ordination; and all but one, who were then in town, and qualified by age to invite him to settle in the ministry, had passed off the stage to their long home. This was to him a painful recollection; having many years previous, been deprived of the partner of his youth, and all the members composing the church, when he was wedded to it; and all but one of those, who had invited him to take the oversight of them in the *Lord*, whose kindness to him he held in grateful remembrance to the last; and having also buried two colleagues, he could not but feel solitary: he was a widower, indeed!

During the Revolutionary struggle between the Colonies and the parent country, Dr. Sumner took an open and decisive part; he was always no less the friend of political, than religious freedom; while the privations, which he endured on account of the deranged state of the then public affairs, with a degree of patience and equanimity, rarely if ever equalled, furnished ample proofs of his sin-

ton some years since, and the subject of salaries having been introduced, and by some complained of, as being too low—and when it was ascertained that his was the lowest salary enjoyed by any of the Clergymen present, and with which he seemed to be entirely satisfied, one of them, in the presence and hearing of the others, enquired of him, “how he could make out to live upon it?” The Doctor replied, “Oh! they that have much, have not enough, and they that have little, have no lack!”

At a dinner party in Worcester, in the latter part of his life, of a number of gentlemen of the Bar, and some others, among whom was the late Francis Blake, then Clerk of the Courts, Dr. Sumner was present, on the invitation of the Sheriff. After dinner, he thought it prudent, at his advanced period of life, to retire early from the table and prepare for home. This early withdrawal was noticed by Mr. Blake, and he publicly expressed to Dr. Sumner his regret on account of it; the Doctor observed, while putting on his coat, that “it is time old folks were at home”—upon which Mr. Blake said to him, “Dr. Sumner, I hope you do not mean, because you are going, it is time for us *all* to go?” “Oh! no,” replied the Doctor, in a pleasant manner, and turning round towards the company, just as he was going out at the door, “you may stay as much *longer* as you are *younger*!” Mr. Blake was afterwards often heard to speak with admiration of this reply.

cerity in the American cause, as well as his confidence in its final triumph. He omitted no reasonable opportunity, either in public discourses, or private interviews, to animate his townsmen to renewed exertions in the cause of freedom and the rights of man. "His constitution was naturally vigorous; through life he was blessed with good health; his punctuality in all his engagements was remarkable, and he was ever prompt to the call of duty. During the period of 62 years, he was *never* absent from the stated communion of his church," and during 57 years of his ministry, "the public exercises of the Sabbath in this place were suspended only *seven* Sundays, on account of his indisposition, or in consequence of his journeying." The sick were sure to find him early at their bedside, tenderly and with a fatherly anxiety to enquire after their situation, and to minister to their spiritual wants; and when sickness was followed by death, his feelings were touched, his sympathies mingled with the grief of the bereaved, and he was among them, ~~and~~ mourner among mourners. The deep yet lively interest he took in the education of children, the punctuality with which he visited and inspected the town schools, the cheerfulness with which he did it, even when past the age of 80, the good impressions made on the minds of the youth by his seasonable remarks and appropriate prayers, will long be remembered. It was a maxim with him, when duty called, never, if I may so express it, to suffer himself to excuse himself. During his ministry, the rite of baptism was administered to 1251 individuals of his society, and 367 persons were admitted into his church: he solemnized 433 marriages, assisted in the ordination of 53 Clergymen, and was a member of 33 mutual and exparte Councils. He preached three funeral sermons at the interments of three Pastors of the church in Rutland: viz. Messrs. Buckminster, Goodrich and Foster, and was moderator of three ordaining Councils in that town, viz: at the ordination of the two last named gentlemen, and that of the Rev. Mr. Clark. It was his request, expressed some years previous to his disease, that, should the Rev. Dr. Bancroft survive him, he might preach his funeral sermon; the event so happened; and his request was complied with, and on the 12th Dec. 1824, all that was mortal of this worthy man, was committed to the tomb.

Mr. Samuel B. Ingersoll, of Beverly, commenced preaching here, Sept. 27, 1819, in aid of the Rev. Dr. Sumner; and on the 14th of May, 1820, the church having made choice of him, on their part, to become the Colleague Pastor, with the Rev. Dr. Sumner, the

town concurred therein ; and on the 14th of June following, he was publicly ordained to that office with a salary of \$650 a year, payments to be made quarterly ; he reserving to himself two Sabbaths in the spring and two in autumn of each and every year. He preached here the *first* Sabbath after his ordination for the *last* time. His health, when he was settled, was feeble ; sickness arrested him, and he with his wife, whom he had married but a few months before, went to Beverly for the recovery of his health, where he died, Nov. 14, 1820, five months after his ordination, at the age of thirty three.

Thus far, since the year 1786, the parochial business had been done in the name of the town. A large number having withdrawn from this religious society, in 1820, and established another for public worship in the south part of the town, it was deemed expedient to revive the parish, the business of which had been merged in that of the town thirty four years, and have its concerns transacted in its own name. Accordingly, it was regularly re-organized on the 26th day of March, 1821, and the necessary parish officers chosen : since which, it has continued its operations as a distinct body in its own name.

June 25th, 1821, the church unanimously made choice (and on the 26th of July following, the parish unanimously concurred therein) of the Rev. Edwards Whipple, late the settled minister of the Congregational church and society in Charlton, to become their pastor as colleague with the Rev. Dr. Sumner. Sept. 26, 1821, he was regularly installed with a salary of \$550 per year to be paid him annually.

His manners were agreeable and his talents of the first order ; but while his parishioners were congratulating one another on the happy re-settlement of a colleague pastor, he was suddenly snatched from them on the 17th of Sept. 1822, having been sick but a few days with a fever, at the age of 44 ; in the vigor of manhood and not a week before, the picture of health, with a fair prospect of living many years to enjoy it. This sudden and so unexpected, as well as repeated disappointment, as may well be expected, threw a gloom over the parish, the recollection of which will not soon be forgotten.

Mr. Ingersoll preached *one* Sabbath, and Mr. Whipple failed *one* of completing a year. Thus while the united labors of Dr. Sumner's two colleagues just completed a full year, his, united to Mr. Cushing's completed a *century*.

August 18, 1823, the parish concurred with the church in the choice of Mr. George Allen to become colleague pastor with the Rev. Dr. Sumner. He was ordained Nov. 19th, 1823; having a settlement of \$300, and a salary of \$550 per annum, for two years, and after that, \$600 annually: he is their present pastor.

In 1791, the proceeds of the sale of certain pews, made by cutting up the body seats in the Meeting House, were appropriated by the town "to begin a fund for the support of a Congregational Minister in the town forever:" in addition to which, the town, in 1799, granted certain other monies and public securities belonging to the town, amounting in all to \$1920, to the use aforesaid; "the interest of which to be added to the principal, until the interest together with the interest of such sums, as have, or may become a part of said fund, shall be sufficient to support a Congregational Minister in said town." Feb. 13, 1801, nine gentlemen of the town were incorporated by the General Court into a body politic by the name of "the Trustees of the Fund appropriated to the support of a Minister of the Congregational denomination in the town of Shrewsbury," with power to fill vacancies and hold personal or real estate to the use aforesaid, "provided, that the same fund shall never exceed the sum of eight thousand dollars in the whole;" and they "not in any case to lessen or make use of any part of the principal." The interest of this fund, under the existing limitation of its principal, can never be sufficient for the purpose intended. The Rev. Mr. Allen's salary exceeds by \$120, the interest of eight thousand dollars. In April after the act of incorporation, the sums subscribed and paid into the fund by certain individuals of the town, amounted to about \$2500; since which time, additions have been made to it by donations and otherwise; and the principal is now about \$5600. Most of the interest was appropriated for the support of the ministry, till 1820; since then, the interest has not been sufficient for that purpose; the residue is made up by a tax regularly assessed on the parish.

The Baptist society in this town is small, compared with either of the others. It is composed of members from this and some of the neighboring towns, but has never been incorporated. It was formed in 1812, and their Meeting House built in 1813; it is 25 feet by 32, with 12 feet posts, and cost not far from \$450; it was, at its formation, styled the Shrewsbury and Boylston Baptist Society, and the number of church members was then thirty three. About two years since, a Baptist Society was formed in Boylston, and most of

those from that town, who usually had worshipped here, joined themselves to that society, since which, this has been styled the Baptist Society in Shrewsbury. The number of members connected with this church in 1825, whose relations had not been removed, was 74. Mr. Elias McGregory was their first settled minister; he was ordained 17th June, 1818, and received by contribution about \$200 per annum; he was dismissed at his own request, in May, 1821, but with great reluctance on the part of the society. After this, several gentlemen officiated here on the Sabbath; among whom was Mr. Samuel W. Vilas; he preached to them nearly a year, and was about to be settled over them, when he sickened and died, July 15, 1823, in the 33d year of his age. He was esteemed and beloved by those who knew him, and his premature death disappointed the expectations of many. This society has not at present any ordained minister; Mr. Henry Archibald preaches to them about half of the time with a compensation, at the rate of \$250 a year.

The Restoration Society was formed April 11, 1820; its present number of male members is about 170, of whom 104 belong to this town, as appears by certificates filed in the Town Clerks office. It was incorporated, April 26, 1824, under a law of this Commonwealth, by the name of the "First Restoration Society in Shrewsbury." Their Meeting House was finished and dedicated, May 29, 1823, and is 41 by 42 feet. It is in the modern style, with a projection of 11 feet by 23, through which, by a door at either end admittance is gained into the house. The projection, on which is a steeple, fronts the Turnpike road; on the south side of which the house is situated. It is about a mile and an half South of the Congregational Meeting House. The Meeting House is painted within and without, and having a pleasant location, makes a handsome appearance. It is furnished with a large well toned organ, an elegant piece of workmanship, made by a self taught and very ingenious young man of this town; and which is used on days of public worship. The house cost about \$3000, An acre of land, for the accommodation of the house and other purposes, was given to the Society by one of its individuals.

The Rev. Jacob Wood was installed over the church and Society, on the day of the dedication of the house, and has a salary of \$468 per annum, raised, till Nov. 1825, by voluntary subscription, but now by legal taxation—six houses for public worship are now standing on the original grant of Shrewsbury

SCHOOLS.—The grants for the support of schools have been \$700 annually ; for several years past, but are now \$720 ; \$200 for Mistress' schools, \$430 for Masters' do. and \$90 for fuel. The town is divided into seven school districts, each having a school house, but all of them owned by the town. The inhabitants are not confined to their respective districts, but may send their children and youth under their care, to either of the schools, as it may best accommodate them. The School houses and districts are distinguished by numbers ; and the amount of money granted each year is annually apportioned among them according to the following rule adopted in 1814, and founded partly on the amount of the valuation, and partly on the number of scholars in each district.

No. 1	draws	16 $\frac{3}{4}$	per cent	No. 5	draws	12	per cent
No. 2		15 $\frac{1}{4}$	do.	No. 6		11 $\frac{1}{4}$	do.
No. 3		17	do.	No. 7		14 $\frac{1}{2}$	do.
No. 4		12 $\frac{3}{4}$	do.				

The number of scholars that attended during the winter season of 1825—6, is about 500.

POOR, &c.—The town has two or three times had under consideration the subject of procuring a farm, whereon to support its paupers. It never had an establishment of this kind, and does not yet deem it expedient to purchase one. The number of paupers supported, some wholly, and others partially, by the town, for five years past, was from 18 to 32 per year ; and their annual average expense to the town, \$650.* They are vendued, sometimes individually, and at others collectively, to the lowest bidder, for one year, commencing on the first of April. It is supposed, that when the paupers of a town are vendued, they are not supported in so economical a manner as might be adopted ; nor in one, that tends so much to their comfort as would be desirable. The practice of venduing them to the lowest bidder is one, the long usage of which, in many places, has obliterated that nice sense of feeling, which makes man shudder at the thought of being instrumental in the sale of his fellow man ; a practice, that places this unfortunate class of people, many of whom have become so by unforeseen circumstances, and consequently without any fault of theirs, in a condition to be sold like slaves. We exclaim against the inhuman practice of sel-

* The number of paupers supported wholly or partially by the town			
was in	1821	19	expense to the town, \$675,56
	1822	18	do. 549,36
	1823	19	do. 527,57
	1824	25	do. 696,11
	1825	32	do. 361,00

ling Africans and negroes ; it is honorable to us to do so ; it is an odious traffic ; and is not the selling of paupers an odious practice ? It has been so long and so generally practised in this part of the country, that for an individual to attempt to remedy it, is for him to set himself against thousands ; yet it is a consolation to know, that many, even a great many, who acquiesce in this practice, do it with great reluctance, and would be glad, from feelings of humanity, to have it discontinued.

It is true, the *body* of the slave is sold for the labor it can perform, while it is the *support* of the pauper, that is put up at auction : but the case is not materially different. Their situation is not so unlike, as it is thought and intended to be ; the support of the slave is incidental to the purchase of his body, while the body of the pauper is incidental to the sale of his support ; the latter has a master no less than the former, who derives to his benefit what can be obtained from his servant's labor ; and as it is natural for a man to make the most he can of a contract, the pauper often has a hard master, as well as the slave ; for while the one is accustomed to hard labor, and often beaten with stripes, the other, too frequently, suffers the want of a sufficient support, as well as kind treatment. In some respects, the situation of the slave is preferable ; his feelings are respected by selling him to the highest bidder, while the feelings of the pauper are mortified by his being sold to the lowest ; and while the one is not sold, perhaps, but once in his life, the other is publicly exposed to sale annually. The mark of degradation is annually stamped upon him, as if to remind him of his dependence on his fellow men. At the same time he is subjected every year to the liability of having a new master ; nor is this all : the slave has not, while the pauper has, the benefit of a tolerable education ; has lived and associated with civilized people, and is possessed of feelings, that have thereby become refined ; it generally so happens, if not out of regard to his feelings, and those of relatives and acquaintance, that the slave, though uncivilized, is sold among strangers, himself a stranger in a strange land ; while the pauper, civilized and of refined feelings, is made by his countrymen to endure the grievous mortification of being publicly sold in his own town, and perhaps, to one, never his friend ; and of being looked down upon in this humiliating situation, caused perhaps by sickness or misfortune beyond his control, by many, who once looked up to him, and of seeing himself neglected, if not despised by others, who, in his better days, had been wont to take him by

the hand. Independent of the better treatment the poor would receive, every town would find it for its interest to have a poorhouse, either by itself, or by uniting with an adjoining town, to have one for the common purposes of both.

POUNDS.—There have been four Pounds built at the expense of the town; the two first of wood, and the two last of stone. The first was erected in 1723, and stood near the brook, by the old Post road, at the west end of Mr. Samuel Bullard's apple orchard, three quarters of a mile east of the Congregational Meeting House; the travelled way, notwithstanding the road was laid where it now is, was then between his house and the brook, and came into the road about half a mile east, and about a quarter of a mile west of his house, and opposite where Capt. Keyes' houses were burnt, in 1723, (of which more hereafter) and continuing west, it left the road to the north, and, passing south of where Henry Baldwin's house now stands, came into the road again more than a mile further west, on the top of Daniel Maynard's hill, so called. The second Pound was built in 1746, and stood on the same road, half a mile further west, partly on ground now occupied by a Blacksmith's shop. The third was built in 1764, on the same spot; and the fourth, in 1799, and stands on the common, a little distance north west from the Congregational Meeting House.

FIRES.—There have been nine dwelling houses, two barns, one school house, and one saw mill burnt in this town. The first was Gershom Wheelock's house, which stood on the old Post road, not far distant from where Mr. Joseph Nurse now lives. No record of any thing relating to this event has been found, by which the precise time when it happened is known. As aged people say, this was the first house burnt in Shrewsbury; it must have been prior to the 7th of August, 1723; since which, no house has been erected on that spot. Mr. Wheelock soon after purchased the house lot No. 23, where his grandson, Deacon Gershom Wheelock, now lives; who has in his possession some small articles of furniture that were saved from the fire. The place where he now lives, descended from father to son and grandson, and has been in their united possession nearly one hundred years. The house burnt, was the first house built in Shrewsbury. Gershom Wheelock, who built it, came here from Marlborough, and was the first man who commenced work in this town.

The next fire was the most remarkable, as well as the most sorrowful occurrence that ever took place in this part of the coun-

try; and, as the town was then in its infancy, was peculiarly shocking. It is related in Whitney's history of the County of Worcester; Whitney says, he gives it in the words of the account published in the only newspaper, as he was told, then printed in New England, if not on this side of Philadelphia. It was a small half sheet, printed by B. Green, and is as follows:

“BOSTON, AUGUST 15, 1723.

“An exact account of the awful burning of Capt. John Keyes' house, with five persons in it, at Shrewsbury, in the night between the 7th and 8th of this inst. taken from a letter of the Rev. Mr. Breck, of Marlborough, and from the mouth of Mr. Ebenezer Bragg,* of the same, formerly of Ipswich, the only person of those, who lodged in the house, who, by a distinguishing providence, escaped the flames.

“Capt. Keyes was building an house about nine or ten feet off his old one. It was almost finished; and Mr. Bragg aforesaid, the carpenter, with his brother Abiel, of 17 years of age, and William Oaks, of 13, his apprentices, were working about it. Capt. Keyes, with his wife and four daughters, lodged in the old one; and the three carpenters, with the three sons of the Captain, viz. Solomon, of 20, John, of 13, and Stephen, of 6 years of age, laying in the new. On Wednesday night, going to bed, they took a more than ordinary care of the fire, being excited thereto, by the saying of one, *he would not have the house burnt for an hundred pounds*; and the reply of another, *he would not for two hundred*; upon which, they carefully raked away the chips lying near it, and stayed till the rest were almost burnt out; and then they went all six together into three beds in one of the chambers; and were very cheerly and merry at their going to bed, which was about ten of the clock. But, about midnight, Mr. Bragg was awakened with a notion of the house being on fire, and a multitude calling to quench it; with which he got up, saw nothing, heard no voice, but could hardly fetch any breath through the stifling smoke; concluded the house was on fire, perceived somebody stirring, against whom he hit two or three times in the dark, and not being able to speak, or breathe any longer, and striking his forehead against the chimney, he thought of the window, and happily found it: when he gained it, he tarried a minute, holding it fast with one hand, and reaching out the other, in hopes of meeting with some one or other to save them, till the smoke and fire came so thick and scorching upon him, he

* Father of the late Deacon John Bragg, of this town.

could endure it no longer. And hearing no noise in the chamber, only as he thought, a faint groan or two, he was forced to jump out, and, the window being small, head foremost; though he supposes, by God's good providence, he turned before he came to the ground.

"As Mr. Bragg was just got up again, Capt. Keyes, being awakened in the old house, was coming to this side of the new, and met him. But the flame immediately burst out of the windows, and the house was quickly all on a light flame. No noise was heard of the other five who perished; and it is very questionable, whether more than one of them moved out of their beds. The old house was also burnt, and almost every thing in it; but the people were saved through the great goodness of God. But a most dreadful sight it was, in the morning, to see the five bodies frying in the fire, among the timbers fallen down in the cellar, till towards the evening; when the few almost consumed fragments, without heads or limbs, were gathered, put into one coffin and buried. Psalm, lxvi. 3. *Say unto God, how terrible art thou in thy works!* James, iv. 15. *Ye know not what shall be on the morrow!* Luke, xii. 40. *Be ye therefore ready!*"—Thus far the Newspaper.

The Capt. Keyes abovenamed was afterwards the well known and much esteemed Major John Keyes, Esq. who died in this town, March 3, 1768, at the advanced age of 94. He left a widow, who lived to be 96 years old, and they lived in the married state 72 years. The houses which were burnt, stood on the north side of the old Post road, a little more than half a mile east of where the Congregational Meeting House now stands. On these spots, and near them, several large and handsome buildings have been erected.

About the year 1750, Jonathan Morse's house was burnt. It was a large two story house, and stood a little south of where the Worcester Turnpike now passes; on the same spot a house was erected by Mr. Southgate a few years since. The next was Joseph Sherman's house; it was burnt about the year 1771, and stood where Capt. Martin Newton's house now is. In August, 1774, George Brown's house was burnt, in the night time—another, still standing, but much decayed, was soon erected upon the same spot. In 1776, the two-story dwelling house of Capt. Thomas Knowlton was burnt: he built another on the same ground, and is the same in which he now lives. A large two-story house, belonging to Deacon Benjamin Goddard, was burnt in Feb. 1799, in the day time, with most of its contents, another was very soon after built on the same spot, in which he now lives, at an advanced age. A two-sto-

ry house, belonging to Thomas W. Ward, Esq. and in the occupation of John Sherman, was burnt in the night time, Jan. 1816, and stood where Mr. Daniel Stone now lives.

In 1797, a school house, standing in the fork of the roads, opposite the house of Mr. Calvin R. Stone, was burnt, with many school books therein. A barn, many years since, belonging to Alpheus Pratt, and, two or three years ago, one belonging to Amasa Knowlton, were destroyed by fire; as was a saw mill, in February last, belonging to Samuel Goddard.

In no one of these calamities were any lives lost, except at the burning of Capt. Keyes' houses. The number of barns burnt have been few, compared with the number of houses; and what is remarkable, no building has ever been burnt by lightning in this town since its settlement.

A small house, near the foot of the hill, west of Rocky plain, on the Post road, suddenly *disappeared* in the night time, about three years since. Report says, it was not a house of the *best fame*; and, as it was occupied by *witches*, and frequented by *wizzards*, it occasioned but little surprise; though it was followed by an explosion that was heard at a considerable distance. From the best accounts, it is supposed, that, some how or other, in the absence of the occupants, fire and powder came in contact—the natural consequence followed—*report* immediately proclaimed the consequences—from curiosity, as well as a due regard to the observance of the laws, an attempt was made to search out the person or persons, who had, to say the least, been so careless as to leave a quantity of powder there: it was at last concluded that it belonged to *nobody*, and, as is generally the case, whatever else of a mischievous nature was done, *nobody* did it!

In 1818, a subscription paper was circulated in this town, for the purpose of procuring means to purchase two fire Engines; they were built here, and procured, one at the expense of \$120, the other at \$130, and placed in houses provided for them at \$31 each. Through the favor of Providence there has been no necessity of using them.

The laudable zeal manifested by the proprietors in guarding against fire, exceeded their judgment in purchasing these engines: the amount of money extinguished in this concern was \$315.

REVOLUTION.—This town early manifested a determination to oppose the measures of the British Parliament, relative to taxation in America—the first public expression of its opinion was at a town

meeting held in May, 1770 ; when a vote of thanks was passed "to the merchants and other inhabitants of the town of Boston, for the noble and generous stand they had made in the defence of the people's rights;" and in May, 1772, it instructed its Representative "by no means, *directly* or *indirectly*, to give up any constitutional right, nor to ask for a removal of the General Assembly, to its ancient and legal seat, in such manner, as to give up the *claim* the House of Representatives have heretofore so justly set up." In January, 1773, the town voted, "that, viewing themselves as subjects, they had an undeniable right to life, liberty, and property; and that the several acts of Parliament and Administration are subversive of those rights."

January, 1774, the town "voted, that we will totally lay aside the use of all Teas on which a duty is payable, or hath been paid by virtue of any Act of the British Parliament—that we will be ever ready to do all in our power to preserve our just rights and privileges—and will view, as an enemy to the continent, any one, who shall appear to be instrumental in carrying said Act of Parliament into execution"—and that the town of Boston be furnished with a copy of the proceedings of this meeting.

In August, 1774, they voted, "that, if the Courts to be holden at Worcester, for the County of Worcester, for the future, be, in consequence of the late Parliamentary Acts, or any new appointments by our Governor, authorized by said Acts, that the town would resist, and not suffer said Courts to do business. In September after, the town directed its Constables not to serve the venires issued by the Court to be holden at Worcester; and "voted to indemnify them for neglecting to serve the illegal and unprecedented venire lately sent to the town." They also "voted to procure an iron Field piece, and ammunition for the same, at the expense, and for the use of the town," which was soon after done—two Delegates were at the same time chosen to represent the town in a General Provincial Congress, to be holden at Concord, the October following. In December after, they chose a Delegate to attend a like Congress, "to be holden at Watertown, or elsewhere, in February or sooner, if need be, and to continue to the Tuesday proceeding the last Wednesday in May succeeding, and no longer"—at the same time, the town adopted unanimously the association of the Continental Congress, and the addition thereto of the Provincial Congress; and "voted to carry them into execution with the *utmost rigor*"—they also prohibited the Collectors from paying any

money in their hands to Harrison Gray, Esq. the Province Treasurer, but directed them to pay the same to Henry Gardner, Esq. of Stow ; and voted to indemnify them for so doing.

In May, 1775, "voted that each parish raise as many men, as possible, to hold themselves in readiness to reinforce our army, near Boston, if needed, with such officers, as they should think proper;" they also chose a committee to examine the Rev. Ebenezer Morse, Messrs. William Crawford, Jotham Bush, Benjamin Fish and Timothy Ross, suspected of toryism. The committee attended to their duty and reported, "that the Rev. Mr. Morse was not so friendly to the common cause, as the committee could wish ; and that in some instances he had been *unfriendly* ; that William Crawford was *wholly* unfriendly, and inclined to take up arms in defence of the King and Parliament ; and that they had admitted the three others suspected, to sign the association, and recommended to the town to receive them, upon their faithfully promising to do their full proportion of duty in resisting and repelling the Kings' troops, &c. The committee of correspondence was then directed, by the town to take from said Morse, his arms, ammunition and warlike implements, of all kinds, to be kept by the Committee ; and he *forbidden* to pass over the lines of the second precinct in Shrewsbury on *any occasion whatever*, without a permit from said committee. The like proceedings were had as to Crawford, except he was not to go beyond the limits of his farm, until the town should see fit to liberate him. The acknowledgment of the other three was accepted, and they, by a vote, were received again into favor. In May, 1776, the town voted unanimously in favor of becoming independent of Great Britain, if the Continental Congress should declare the same. In 1777, the persons, before named, suspected of toryism, were, together with Lewis Allen,* declared, by a vote of the town, to be

* Lewis Allen was at this time a young man ; he came here with his father, Lewis Allen, from Boston, when a child ; his father, an old sea Captain, had many of those peculiarities observable in those, who have long followed the seas—he lived where Col. Joseph Henshaw afterwards lived and died—many anecdotes are related of him ; of which the following is one—he went down to the then Baldwin tavern, where Mr. Bullard now lives, taking with him his little son Lewis, and his black man, *Boston*. Caleb, an older brother of Lewis, was left at home : Lewis, while at Baldwin's, clambered up upon a pair of "cheese tongs" that stood by the well curb, and fell into the well: Captain Allen and others were standing by and the boy was taken out unhurt—Captain Allen had no sooner recovered from his fright, than he exclaimed, "Boston! run—run home—and see if *Caleb* is not in *our well*!! for I never knew Lewis do a d—d trick, but what Caleb immediately did another just like it!" Boston ran, as commanded—but, on reaching home,

inimical to the United States, and dangerous persons to reside within this State; and a committee was chosen to proceed against each and all of them at the next court of General Sessions of the Peace.

The resolute and daring spirit manifested by the town, thus early, to contend with unequal force, and where nothing but the justice of the cause could lay a foundation for hope of success, did not terminate in *votes* and *paper resolutions*. The town replenished and enlarged its stock of ammunition; arms were procured, and the inhabitants cheerfully turned out once a week to be instructed in military discipline. Boston had taken the lead in opposition to arbitrary power; distinguished individuals there, and in other towns, busily employed themselves in infusing among the people throughout the country, a knowledge of their rights; which was followed, as might have been expected, by public expressions on their part, from all quarters, *manfully to maintain them*. As the mercury in the political thermometer rose in the country, the town of Boston took higher ground; and Revolution marched onward; of the troops, that soon after invested Boston, this town sent a large number, and had its complement in the service during the war.

In 1778, a frame of government, adopted by the General Court of this State and submitted to the people for acceptance, was laid before the town, and disapproved of; four being for, and one hundred against it.

MISCELLANEOUS.—There is in the south west part of the town, near Mr. Elijah Rice's, a large meadow of about seventy acres, owned by several individuals, which has lately been found to contain excellent *peat*; it has been examined in various parts of the meadow, and taken out in some places to the depth of several feet, and in all, proves to be of a superior quality: so great is the quantity, it may be said to be inexhaustable.

A majority of this town, in 1786, sided with Shays in his opposition to government—many of its inhabitants took arms and repaired to the field—they aided in stopping the Courts, &c. and, for a time, the peace of the town was greatly disturbed and fears were entertained, that it would be followed with bloodshed—happily quiet and order were restored—it seems now to be as generally

found his master's fears were groundless. The son, Lewis Allen, having arrived to man's estate, afterwards removed to Leicester, owned the Mount Pleasant farm, and died there. He was buried in the garden of the Mount Pleasant farm, and near the road, at his own request; that he might, as he said, learn the news, when the stage came from Boston!

admitted, that there were causes of complaint, as it is, that the course pursued to remove them was unjustifiable.

Few towns have been favored with more general health than this. The disorders, which have prevailed here to the greatest extent, have been the dysentery and the canker-rash. In 1770, twenty seven persons died here of the latter; two families lost four in each; and in 1775, the former was brought into this place from the camp, and proved fatal to numbers; and the whole number of deaths in that year was nineteen. Dr. Sumner observes, in his half century sermon, preached June 23, 1812, that "these two were the years of our greatest mortality—and that in 1790, one in fifty of our inhabitants had passed eighty years of age; of these one died in her hundred and fifth year,* and another lived to be one hundred and five years and two months old†: they that live the longest, find an appointed time, beyond which they cannot pass." In 1821, the dysentery prevailed here again, principally among children, to an alarming degree; for a time, it proved fatal to nearly all, who were attacked with it. The number of deaths in that year, far exceeded those in any other, and amounted to forty.

The following table exhibits the number of deaths in this town, in each year, for the last ten years, commencing January 1, 1816, and ending December 31, 1825.

	1816	'17	'18	'19	'20	'21	'22	'23	'24	'25	Total.
Under 1	5	1	1	1	0	2	0	4	0	0	14
Between 1 & 5	2	0	1	3	0	20	2	6	6	2	42
Between 5 & 10	0	1	3	0	1	2	1	0	2	1	11
Between 10 & 20	0	2	0	0	1	4	1	0	1	0	9
Between 20 & 30	3	3	2	5	1	4	1	2	2	2	25
Between 30 & 40	4	2	3	0	0	2	2	1	2	2	18
Between 40 & 50	3	2	1	1	0	0	2	2	0	1	12
Between 50 & 60	1	2	2	0	1	1	2	0	2	2	13
Between 60 & 70	0	2	1	0	2	2	1	1	1	1	11
Between 70 & 80	1	4	1	2	4	2	2	3	2	4	25
Between 80 & 90	1	0	2	1	1	1	3	2	4	1	16
Over 90	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
	<hr/> 21	<hr/> 20	<hr/> 27	<hr/> 13	<hr/> 11	<hr/> 40	<hr/> 17	<hr/> 21	<hr/> 24	<hr/> 16	<hr/> 200

Of those living, there were, on the first day of January, 1826, one male over 90—females over that age, none—over 80 and under 90, of males 8; females 8—over 70 and under 80, of males 14; females, 15—total over 70—46. In 1810, the population of this town was 1210; in 1820—1458; if the increase has been one half as great in five years past, as it was in the ten preceeding, it amounts now to

* Widow Mary Jones.

† Widow Ruth Garfield.

1582. The number of ratable polls is not less than three hundred and ninety.

Twenty seven of the youth of this town have received a collegiate education.

The following is a Catalogue of their names, when and where graduated, the places of their after residence, professions, &c.

* Artemas Ward, 1788, Shrewsbury.	⁴ / ₁	Harvard University,	{ Chief Jus. C. C. Pleas, Worcester Co.; Maj. Gen. in the Revolution; Mem. Con. &c.†
* Jacob Cushing, do.	do.	Waltham,	ordained minister there, DD.
* Ezekiel Dodge, 1749	do.	Abington,	do.
* Lemuel Hedge, 1759	do.	Warwick,	do.
* Nehemiah Parker, 1763	do.	Hubbardston,	do.
* John Cushing, 1764	do.	Ashburnham,	do.
* Edward Goddard, do.	do.	Swansey, N. H.	do.
* Silas Bigelow, 1765	do.	Paxton,	do.
* Nathan Goddard, 1770	do.		
Isaac Stone, do.	do.	Douglass,	do.
Aaron Crosby, do.	do.	Dummerston, Vt.	do.
* Benjamin Heywood, 1775	do.	Worcester,	{ Judge C. C. Pleas, Worcester County.
Benjamin Stone, 1776	do.	Shrewsbury	{ First Preceptor of Leicester Acad'y, and Preceptor of other do. now resident in Shrewsbury.
* Samuel Crosby, 1777	do.	Charlestown, N. H.	Apothecary.
Artemas Ward, 1783	do.	Boston,	{ Member of Congress, and now Chief Jus. C. C. Pleas.
* Frederick Parker, 1784	do.	Canterbury,	Minister there.
Calvin Goddard, 1786	Dartmouth Col.	Norwich, Conn.	{ Mem. Congress, and Judge of Sup. Court.
Samuel Sumner, do.	do.	Southborough,	{ Minister there, now resident in Vermont.
* Otis Crosby, 1791	do.		Ordained minister.
* Henry D. Ward, 1791	H. U.		{ Removed to Columbia, S. C. an eminent Counsellor at Law, died at Middletown, Conn.
Wilkes Allen, 1801	do.	Chelmsford,	Minister there.
Andrew H. Ward, 1803	do.	Shrewsbury,	Counsellor at Law.
David Brigham, 1810	do.	Fitchburg,	do.
Henry D. Ward, 1816	do.		Resident Graduate, Cambridge.

* Dead. † A biographical sketch of the life of the Honorable Artemas Ward, accompanied with interesting revolutionary papers, &c. will be furnished hereafter.

* Azariah Wilson, do. do. { Went out Chaplain in the Macedonian, Capt. Downs, and died at Valparaiso, 1818.

Abel Harrington, 1825, Providence College, At Law School, Northampton.

William Pratt, do do. Resident in Shrewsbury.

It furnished one field officer in the French war, preceeding the Revolution, and one Major General in the Revolutionary war—it has also furnished one member of the Executive Council, and one Speaker of the House of Representatives of this Commonwealth—one Judge of Probate, and two Judges of the Court of Common Pleas for the County of Worcester—one Representative to Congress, and one High Sheriff, for the county aforesaid.

There are between thirty and forty buildings in this town insured by the Worcester Mutual Fire Insurance Company, which is attracting the attention of its citizens, in proportion as they regard the truth of the old proverb, "*that a penny saved is as good as a penny earned.*" There are in this town, five English and West India goods stores, five licensed public houses, three Gunsmiths, two Tanneries, four Blacksmiths, and a good supply of other mechanics, two Clergymen, three Physicians, and one gentleman in the profession of the Law.

Great, indeed, has been the emigration from this town for the last forty years, yet it has gradually increased in numbers and respectability, and greatly improved in agriculture and the mechanic arts. Its present flourishing condition justifies the expectation, that it will go on, "prospering and to prosper" for years long yet to come, and, as we hope and trust, till time shall be no more.

INDEX TO MR. WARD'S HISTORY OF SHREWSBURY.

Agricultural Society, 6 ; Agriculture, practices in, 6 ; Assabet, River 11 ; Allen, Rev. George, ordained, salary, 22 ; Archibald, Mr. Henry, 23 ; Allen, Lewis anecdote of, 31 ; Allen, Wilkes, graduated, 34.

Boylston, 3, error in plan of, 6 ; Brooks, Noah, set off, 3 ; Bowman's Island, 10 ; Bayberry Island, 10 ; Brooks, 11 ; Bummet Brook, 11 ; Bridge, Long Pond, construction and destruction of, 13 ; Burying ground, 15 ; Breck, his sermon, 16, letter, 27 ; Barrett, Mr. nomination as minister, 17 ; Bayley, Mr. nominated minister, 17 ; Buckminster, Mr. 20 ; Bancroft, Rev. Dr. 20 ; Baptist society, 22 ; Bullard, Samuel, 26 ; Baldwin, Henry, 26 ; Bragg, Ebenezer, account of fire, 27 ; Bragg, Abiel, 27 ; Bragg, Deacon John, 27 ; Bush, Jotham, 31 ; Bigelow, Silas graduated, 34 ; Brigham, David graduated, 34.

Cutler, Ebenezer set off, 3 ; Cultivation, 6 ; Coal, indications 6 ; Clay, 9 ; Canal, Blackstone 10 ; Common, 15 ; Cushing, Mr. nominated minister, settled, salary, 17 ; Courts, vote in relation to 30 ; Crawford, William, 31 ; Cushing, Jacob graduated, 34 ; Cushing, John graduated, 34 ; Crosby, Aaron graduated, 34 ; Crosby, Samuel graduated, 34 ; Crosby, Otis graduated, 34.

Dam at the outlet of Long Pond, 11 ; Delegates to Provincial Congress, 30 ; Deaths for ten years, 33 ; Dodge, Ezekiel graduate, 34 ; Diseases, 33.

Eager, Zachariah 3 ; Extent of the town, 15 ; Engines, fire, 29.

Families, set off, 3 ; Foster, Jonathan set off, 3 ; Face of the town, 6 ; Forest trees, 6 ; Fishes, improvement of breeds, 8, 9 ; Flint's pond, 10 ; Foster, Rev. Mr. 20 ; Fund, ministerial, 22 ; Fisk, Benjamin 31.

Grant, original 1717, 1 ; Grafton, families annexed to, 3 ; Grape Island, 9 ; Grass Island, 9, 10 ; Grist mills, 12 ; Goulding hill, 12 ; Goodrich, Rev. Mr. 20 ; Goddard, Benjamin, 28 ; Gray, Harrison, 31 ; Garfield, Widow Ruth, 33 ;

Goddard, Edward, graduated, 34 ; Goddard, Nathan graduated, 34 ; Goddard, Calvin graduated, 31.

Howe, Daniel, 2 ; Harvey, Z. 3 ; Half Moon Pond, 10 ; Highlands, 12 ; Howe, Elizabeth 16 ; Houghton, John 16 ; Hills, 12, Maynard, 26 ; Henshaw, Col. Joseph, 31 ; Heywood, Benjamin, graduated, 34 ; Hedge, Lemuel, graduated, 34 ; Harrington, Jubal, graduated, 35.

Indians, no disturbances from 1, 2, not mentioned in records, 2 ; Islands in Long Pond, 9 ; Ingersoll, Samuel B. 20, ordained, died, 21 ; Insurance, 35. Jordan Pond, 11.

Keyes, Silas, his survey, 4, 5 ; Keyes, John, 2, 26, 27 ; Keyes, Capt. John, house burnt, 27, his sons, Solomon, John, Stephen, 27 ; Knowlton, Capt. Thomas, 28.

Lancaster, families annexed to 3 ; Leg, annexed to Lancaster, 3 ; Long Pond, 8, islands in, 9 ; Little Pine Island, 9 ; Longevity, 33.

Minerals, 6 ; Manure, increasing, 7 ; Mills, 12 ; Meeting House Hill, 12 ; Meeting Houses, 16, 17, 22 ; Ministers, 17, 18, 20, 21 ; McGregory, Mr. Elias, 23 ; Maynard's, Daniel, hill, 26 ; Morse, Jonathan, house burnt, 28 ; Morse, Rev. Ebenezer, 31 ; Mortality, bill of, 33.

Newton, Obediah set off, 3 ; Newton, Edward set off, 3 ; Nurses Corner, 3 ; Newton, Samuel set off, 3 ; Nurse, William set off, 3 ; Nurse, Joseph, 26 ; Newton, Capt. Martin, 28.

Outlet of Long Pond, 10, 11.

Petition for privileges, 1727, 2 ; Parish, 3, 17, 21 ; Parish, second 3, 17 ; Productions, vegetable, 7 ; Plaister of Paris, 7 ; Ponds, 8 ; Paine, Joshua, settled, salary, declined, 17 ; Pews, sold, 22 ; Poor, thoughts on the support of, 25 ; Paupers, numbers, expense, sale, 24 ; Pounds, situation of, 26 ; Parker, Nehemiah graduated, 34 ; Parker, Frederic graduated, 34 ; Pratt, William graduated, 35 ; Population, 34.

Quinepoxet river, 3 ; Quinsigamond lake, 8.

Read, David 3 ; Ram Island, 9 ; Round Pond, 10 ; Rocky Plain, 12, 16 ; Rawson Hill, 12 ; Roads, 12, 13, 14 ; Restoration Society, 23 ; Revolutionary History, 29 ; Representatives, instructions to, 30 ; Rice, Elijah, 32.

Shrewsbury, situation, 1 ; boundaries, 4, 5 ; extent, 2, 3, 15 ; survey of Keyes, 4, 5 ; leg, 3 ; shoe, 3 ; second parish, 3 ; cultivation, 6 ; face of the town, 6 ; forests, 6 ; coal, indications of 6 ; productions, 7 ; ponds, 8 ; streams, 11 ; mills, 12 ; high lands, 12 ; roads, 12 ; stages, 15 ; meeting houses, 16, 17, 22, 23 ; pews sold, 22 ; ministers, 17, 18, 20, 21 ; baptist society, 22 ; restoration society, 23 ; schools, 24 ; poor, 24, 25 ; pounds, 26 ; fires, 26, 27, 28, 29 ; engines, 29 ; revolution, 29, 30, 31, 32 ; peat, 32 ; part taken by inhabitants in Shay's insurrection, 32 ; revolutionary history, 29, 32 ; health and mortality, 33 ; graduates from colleges, 34 ; distinguished men, 35 ; population, 34 ; insurances, 35 ; emigration, 35 ; manufactories, 35 ; public houses, 35 ; stores, 35 ; mechanics, 35 ; Shoe, set off, 3 ; Survey of Silas Keyes, 1795, 4 ; Sherman's Island, 10 ; Shoemaker Island, 10 ; Sharp Pine Island, 10 ; Stratton Island, 10 ; Sewall's Pond, 11 ; Sewall's Hill, 12 ; Sounding Hill, 12 ; Stages, 15 ; Societies, religious, 16, 17, 22, 23 ; Sumner, Joseph settled, 17, salary, 18, ordained, 18, notice of his life, 19, anecdote of 19, character, 20, funeral sermon, 20 ; Schools, grant for, districts, 24 ; Stone, Mr. Calvin R. fire, near, 29 ; Shays, his opposition, 32 ; Stone, Isaac graduated, 34 ; Stone, Benjamin graduated, 34 ; Sumner, Samuel graduated, 34.

Trenches for walls, 7 ; Turnpike, Worcester, 13 ; Turapike, Holden and Rutland, 14 ; Taylor, William original proprietor, 16.

Vilas, Mr. Samuel W. 23 ; Votes in relation to the revolutionary contest, 30, 31.

West Boylston, 22 ; Ward, Nahum 2 ; Westborough, family annexed, 3 ; Whitney, William set off, 3 ; Wheelock, Daniel set off, 3 ; Whitney, Elijah, 3 ; Whipple, Rev. Edward, installed, character, died, 21 ; Wood, Rev. Jacob 23 ; Wheelock, Gershom house burnt, 26 ; Whitney's history, quoted, 27 ; Ward, Artemas Gen. 34 ; Ward, Artemas, Judge, 34 ; Ward, Andrew H. graduated, 34 ; Ward, Henry D. graduated, 34 ; Wilson, Azariah graduated, 35.

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